

APPENDIX E

Principal Comments—Spring 2002

CAHSEE LONGITUDINAL SAMPLE SURVEYS SPRING 2002—CONTENT ANALYSIS

PRINCIPAL [47]

3. Have there been any major staff or faculty changes in your school over the past three years?

Administrator Changes [12 of 45 comments/27 percent]

- Four new administrators including the principal.
- Four of seven administrators are new to school. Testing coordinator is in his first semester in position.

Teacher Changes [22/49 percent]

- Change in staff [11/24 percent]
- Retirements created vacancies and opportunity to hire new teachers. [3]
- New staff due to an increase in enrollment. [2]
- Declining enrollment resulted in one staff layoff last year. [2]
- Too many sub in math.
- Teachers in English—still working on credentials.
- Lost many 1st and 2nd year teachers due to economics. They moved to areas where they could afford homes.
- With the opening of a new high school a number of math, English and science instructors opted to transfer to the [other] school. 80 percent of our instructional staff live in [that town].

No major changes [11/24 percent]

7. Comments related to “Indicate the various specialty education programs offered by your school.”

Remedial programs [3 of 9 comments/33 percent]

- Remedial class in reading

EL/bilingual [2/22 percent]

- English learners have pull out services provided by a bilingual aide. We have interactive computer programs, books and materials designed to enhance English learners and 2 CLAD teachers who provide assistance labs, tutorials. One-on-one with the teacher and multiple meetings provide remediation.

Other [4/44 percent]

- Special Day Program
- Sheltered courses
- California Partnership Academy
- Multilingual Teacher Academy

10. Have there been any changes in the student demographics and/or academic environment over the past three years?

- Added remedial/tutoring work, particularly reading and math [9 of 43 comments/21 percent]
- Added AP courses [8/19 percent]
- Added/increased various courses including English and math [6/14 percent]
- Adopted/received funding for new school-wide program [6/14 percent]
- Aligned core subjects/added new courses to meet state standards [6/14 percent]
- Boundary changes resulted in increase enrollment/diversity/LEP population/SES variation [5/12 percent]
- Other comments [3/7 percent] (increased class size in science and social studies; block scheduling; high foster are student population).

11. How would you describe the academic atmosphere of your school?

- Good/forward moving/progressing [17 of 39 comments/44 percent]
- Rigorous/challenging [12/31 percent]
- Average/average for continuation school [6/15 percent]
- Low/varies [2/5 percent]
- Using school-wide goals [2/5 percent]

Sample comments

- In the past years, stakeholders had average expectations. That feeling is changing. Higher expectations for staff and students is the current trend. Much of this is due to the CAHSEE and API.
- We are a continuation high school for high risk students. Very little parental involvement but are developing curriculum to assist students passing the CAHSEE.
- Student motivation is not as great as it could be; rigor of the curriculum is increasing, parent involvement is low, but increasing.
- Forward movement toward student achievement in all areas. Staff is energetic and committed to student learning. Students are motivated. Parent involvement could be improved.
- District-wide performance goals have been adopted by Board as graduation requirements. The achievement bar has been raised and staff is working to develop support systems to help students.

12. How would you describe efforts across your school's faculty to support the ELA and math teachers who must implement the CAHSEE standards?

- Improving level of support/using teamwork/professional development across faculty [14 of 37 comments/38 percent]
- Good/positive support [11/30 percent]
- Outstanding support/tremendous buy-in [7/19 percent]
- Varies [2/5 percent]
- Reading is priority for all teachers [2/5 percent]
- No support [1/3 percent]

Sample comments

- A lot of support. However, students are still ill-prepared. Staff spend 5–10 minutes 3 times weekly in all classes teaching math test prep materials. English teachers have PM classes for assistance to students.
- Every department has been made aware of the math and ELA standards tested on the CAHSEE. Each department identified standards they would reinforce in its content area.
- Our district has provided encouragement, focused workshops and resources to move toward standards.
- All instructional staff support the English-language Arts and math program and several (including PE) are willing to do cross-curricular re-enforcement of the ELA and math standards in their own curriculum.
- We have many things to think about here - SAT-9, AP, IB, Golden State, LEP testing and CAHSEE. The school district offers generous help through department heads to assist teachers with CAHSEE standards. This effort continues to pick up steam.

23. What was your reaction to your students' performance on the Spring 2001 CAHSEE?

- The largest number of responses indicated their schools took the test seriously/put forth excellent effort/were very focused on the 2001 CAHSEE. [7 of 32 comments/22 percent]
- Many other comments mentioned certain student populations (e.g., EL, at-risk, college prep, low reading) as related to the 2001 CAHSEE results. [6/19 percent]
- Some comments can be summarized as feeling there was not a great expectation that the 2001 CAHSEE scores would be very revealing. [3/9 percent]
- The remaining were isolated comments. [16/50 percent]

24. Describe what you think about the CAHSEE individual and group score report.

- Clear/understandable/user-friendly/well done/useful [11 of 34 comments/32 percent]
- Okay/fine/helpful [9/26 percent]
- Turnaround time too long [8/24 percent]
- Confusing/needs to be clearer/needs workshop to clarify [4/13 percent]
- Not seen/NA [2/6 percent]

Sample comments

- Report is clear and understandable, helpful data to plan for HSEE classes. With useful information for teachers and counselors.
- Individual score reports were easy to understand and explain to students and parents. Group scores were sufficient. Scores need to arrive in more timely manner.

- The individual and group reports are clear, concise, and easy for parents and students to understand. Timeliness of reporting scores is critical as summer remediation programs/summer school will focus on students' improving deficiencies.
- I can read them but some parents find them difficult. The timeliness is about as good as we can hope for on a statewide test.
- We get the same data from our SAT/9 STAR results. How many ways can the state tell us our students underperform! How much \$ can the state spend giving us this information!

38. What plans or strategies do you and your faculty/staff have to prepare for Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan changes that will address the participation of a student with a disability in the CAHSEE? At what stage are you in implementing these?

- Follow state guidelines/district policy [10 of 48 comments/21 percent]
- Strong IEP-504 process/inform parents of requirement/building CAHSEE accommodations into IEP-504 [7/15 percent]
- Have a plan/starting to work with special education teachers [6/13 percent]
- Staff development to ensure understanding of IEP-504 [5/10 percent]
- No plan/not addressed [5/10 percent]
- Coordinator/counselor assigned [5/10 percent]
- Software/tutoring/remedial work on basic skills [4/8 percent]
- No IEP students [4/8 percent]
- Work one to one with students [1/2 percent]
- Mainstreaming more students [1/2 percent]

Sample comments

- Consistent with state guidelines. We will look at each individual student. Provide individual tutoring/instruction.
- Focused staff development will be combined to insure that teachers understand all rules/regulations regarding IEP and 504s.
- Parents are informed of graduation requirements and CAHSEE requirement at IEP meetings. Alternative diplomas are being explored for students who do not pass exam or meet requirements. Software programs are used to review basic skills.
- At this site, we provide assistance to students with special needs by implementing the accommodations allowed by the state. This includes audio/CDs for both math and language arts. Also, students are allowed to use a calculator. These provisions are stated in the IEP only for students who require the accommodations listed above and whose disability requires these accommodations on a daily basis.
- We are at the beginning stages of implementing this section. We are working closely with our special education teachers.
- I must admit to some confusion from the last minute direction regarding special education students and the CAHSEE. My understanding is that any accommodations that we make for IEP or 504 plans cannot change the construct of the test. We allowed extra time, more private testing situations, and a trained reader.

39. What plans or strategies do you and your faculty/staff have to help English learners (EL) overcome language barriers so they can succeed in meeting the requirement of the CAHSEE? At what stage are you in implementing these?

- Special academic work/programs/tutoring/summer school [15 of 47 comments/32 percent]
- No/few EL [9/19 percent]
- Have a plan/starting to implement a plan [4/9 percent]
- No IEP students [4/9 percent]
- Staff development [3/6 percent]
- No plan/not addressed [3/6 percent]
- ESL teachers handle [3/6 percent]
- Tracking progress/assessing to reclassify to Fluent as soon as possible [2/4 percent]
- Work one to one with students [1/2 percent]
- Follow state guidelines/district policy [1/2 percent]
- Portfolio assessment productive [1/2 percent]

- Use CELDT results to inform [1/2 percent]

Sample comments

- We plan to reduce our program to specific instructional units that provide more support for ELL students. This program will include tutorials, expanded opportunities to complete assignments, more integration of units across departments and additional staff development opportunities.
- Develop comprehensive ELL program to meet the content standard.
- Our EL students in ESL classes must pass all ELD standards from ESLIA onward. The portfolio assessment has been very productive.
- This is the first year that we have had CELDT identified EL students. Our plans for next year will have to have them follow the district plan for EL students. For us, this will mean placing students with CLAD certified teachers and, in many cases, providing a reading or language development class in addition to the assigned English class.
- Administered CELT for first time this year. Assign administrator to oversee implementation of curricular and instructional strategies for identified ELL students.
- Students who are enrolled in our district but have been in the country less than 12 months are eligible to attend a school where they are immersed in English. At the comprehensive site, each ELD II student is also enrolled in an ELD reading class. Students in ELD III are also enrolled in a mainstream English class.

40. Please describe any specific challenges you feel your school and students face in successfully meeting the requirements of the CAHSEE. [NOTE SLIPPED BULLETS HERE AND THERE THROUGHOUT THIS SECTION]

Academic Issues [15 of 37 comments/41 percent]

- Inadequate preparation/assisting special education students

Sample comments

- Being a continuation school, students referred to us have already tried and failed courses—tests in referring school. The challenge would be to surmount the deficits created in previous 2-3 years of traditional HS failures—and get students skilled/knowledgeable to pass the CAHSEE.
- Many of our students are arriving with a sub-grade reading level. This ranges from 2nd grade to 6th grade. Additionally, 40 percent of our school student body are English language learners. Success on the CAHSEE is dependent on (1) literacy, (2) language proficiency, and (3) math preparation through algebra 1. Number 3 cannot occur if 1, 2, or both are not met.
- Poor attendance and lack of reading skills are a major problem for continuation schools.
- (1) Low reading scores for the majority of our student; (2) Language barriers; (3) our enrollment includes 1,450 LEP students (Limited English Proficiency) and 450 special education pupils (44 percent of our total enrollment for both categories).
- Literacy is a challenge. We are working diligently to improve reading as well as math skills for incoming students. We have implemented Accelerated Reader and Math programs, school-wide Sustained Silent Reading, tutoring, and summer literacy and math camps.

School/District/State-Related Issues [13/35 percent]

- Articulation/small school constraints/teacher motivation/scheduling/raising expectations/identifying interventions to use to help failing students/too much testing

Sample comments

- Increased articulation with the 37 middle schools that send us students.
- The greatest challenge to face us is the large number of teachers who are mentally retired and our inability to remove them from the classroom.
- Conflicting information from CDE on CAHSEE.
- I continue to believe that with students never having to meet any standard for progress from K through 8th grade and suddenly telling them that they must pass a standards-based exam to graduate from high school puts a tremendous burden on them.

Behavior Issues [9/24 percent]

- Low student motivation/lack parent support/high mobility/poor attendance/

Sample comments

- Student motivation and attitude
- Cultural shift: "Education" the title is important but the motivation to achieve is minimum.

- Being a continuation school, students referred to us have already tried and failed courses—tests in referring school. The challenge would be to surmount the deficits created in previous 2-3 years of traditional HS failures—and get students skilled/knowledgeable to pass the CAHSEE.

41. Please describe any specific benefits for your school and students that you feel are associated with the requirements of the CAHSEE.

Helps focus instruction/curriculum based on standards [12 of 42 comments/29 percent]

- Teachers have modified their teaching style to address the state and district standards instead of just providing students with information. More follow-up and monitoring is being done.
- It helps keep all of us focused on the standards. Although I think the standards tests associated with STAR are more useful because they are course specific.
- I think the CAHSEE has served to standardize our curriculum District-wide. When fully implemented, it will most certainly provide a standardized and rigorous curriculum for ALL students.

Provides statewide/common standards for all California students [8/19 percent]

- I like that all California students must pass the same test to get a diploma.
- There is one test state-wide that all students must pass.
- CAHSEE has forced our district and site to develop a comprehensive plan to service and serve our deficient students.

Raises academic achievement level for all students/added rigor [7/17 percent]

- Raises the academic achievement level for all students.

Accountability [6/14 percent]

- Holds students, parents, and teachers accountable.
- Individual students have accountability with the CAHSEE.

No benefit [4/10 percent]

- There is no benefit. Students are unable to test properly. Too many transients, ELD, and I don't care attitude. This applies to about 5 percent of students. This population is also the population that causes classroom disruptions.
- None. More time spent away from quality teaching and learning.

Motivates students [3/7 percent]

- This is the one test that motivates our students since they feel it has a direct bearing on them.
- Motivate students to improve classroom performance in order to pass CAHSEE. In late April the state board decided to replace in 2003 the SAT-9 with the CAT. ETS also develops the CAHSEE. This will better correlate state and district standards with the test—an improvement central office and staff have been pressing for since 1999.

Other comments [2/5 percent]

42. Please write any comments about other factors specific to your school that are influencing preparation for or performance on the CAHSEE

Sample of 32 Quite Disparate Comments

- Mobility factor, 95 percent minority, 44 percent LEP/special education; large urban high school.
- Test should be given on Saturdays—too much time away from instruction.
- The amount of required testing (STAR, CAHSEE, GSE, SAT, ALT, ASVAB, CLOT, SABE, etc.) during the school and especially second semester is RIDICULOUS.
- Diverse student population which is impacted by polarization of an entrenched faculty.
- Economically disadvantaged face grave problems taking CAHSEE. It's hard to catch up a person who is 6 years behind on an average.
- The stress level for students who have failed the test a second time will be difficult to address. I think students will simply give up after the third or fourth failure.
- Parent information and involvement are critical. Any supplementary material to assist with parent and community involvement strategies will help. Web-based tutoring and training made available to the student will also help.
- Only able to take test 2 times a year rather than when the student is ready to graduate. This is going to be a BIG problem for continuation and alternative schools.
- We foresee many drop-outs in alternative ed.

- We have a 10 percent Special Education population and a 5 percent English learner population. Our challenge is to prepare these students for the CAHSEE. Also, Special Education parents are upset that their students must pass the CAHSEE in order to receive a high school diploma.

